

The Athletic Trainer's Perspective on Athletics' Drug Policy and Program at the Junior and Community College Level

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ABSTRACT

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) has only a position statement in regards to drug testing policy and procedure when compared to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) detailed drug testing program handbook. The NJCAA position statement brings about speculation of how drug testing is monitored and enforced on this level, and if there is a drug education program being implemented by every institution. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to look at the quality of drug policy and intervention programs through the athletic trainer at different institutions within the NJCAA. This considers whether perception of policy and intervention programs measure up to the NCAA drug policy and program guidelines. **METHODS:** A survey was developed in Qualtrics based on guidelines presented in the NCAA drug testing program handbook. After receiving approval from the institutional review board, a study was sent out to 200 institutions within the NJCAA that had a listed athletic trainer. Email requests for participation were sent with follow-up reminders sent at the two- and four-week marks. The survey remained open for a period of five weeks. After the survey was closed, nonparametric analysis was used to see whether the perceived characteristics of institutional guidelines were in line with the NCAA's guideline on banned drugs, drug education guidelines, and institutional drug testing. **RESULTS:** Descriptive statistical analysis was used to describe the relationship between the characteristics of institutional guidelines and the NCAA's guideline on banned drugs, drug education guidelines, and institutional drug testing. The average, median, and mode was taken for each question. In running a descriptive analysis, it was shown that the average answer for awareness of policy was "yes;" however the average answer whether they had read the either policy was "no." When asked if the institution athletics department had a substance use/abuse education program, the most reported and average answer was "no." Likert scale questions 9.2, 9.4, and 9.9 regarding characteristics of that institution's drug policy and program showed significant findings. The average answer to these questions was "somewhat disagree," but the answer that was most reported was "disagree." **CONCLUSION:** The results of the survey showed that there is some following of NCAA guidelines despite the lack of detailed guidelines from the NJCAA. When it came to whether an institution's drug testing policy and program shared characteristics of the NCAA's handbook on drug testing, most athletic trainers in the NJCAA who completed the survey either agreed or somewhat agreed to most of the Likert scale questions. However, questions 9.2, 9.4, and 9.9 from the survey showed a lack of agreement on average and within mode. These questions covered some key characteristics of the NCAA's handbook. Overall, the NJCAA could enforce better drug testing guidelines with either a handbook, like the NCAA's, or by outlining them in more detail in their position statement.